United Nations ST/IC/2017/35

Secretariat

1 December 2017

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Management

Subject: **Relocation grant (lump-sum option for unaccompanied shipments or relocation shipments): rates**

1. Pursuant to part V of administrative instruction ST/AI/2016/4, the purpose of the present circular is to inform staff of the schedule of rates for relocation grant in lieu of unaccompanied shipment or relocation shipment, effective 1 December 2017.

2. There are two global rates, single and family, for all eligible staff members, except Associate Experts and Junior Professional Officers (see para. 3 below), serving on appointments or assignments, other than temporary appointments, of one year or more or separating from service following appointments or assignments of one year or more. The rates are:

(a) Single rate: $13,000;

(b) Family rate: $18,000.

3. There are two global rates, single and family, for Associate Experts and Junior Professional Officers serving on appointments or assignments of one year or more or separating from service following appointments or assignments of one year or more, which are 60 per cent of the amounts provided in paragraph 2 above. The rates are:

(a) Single rate: $7,800;

(b) Family rate: $10,800.

4. The rate for appointments or assignments of less than one year and an unaccompanied shipment entitlement of 100 kilograms (or 0.62 cubic metres) is $1,500. If an appointment or assignment, other than a temporary appointment, of less than one year is subsequently extended so that the total period is one year or more, the staff member may be entitled to the amounts specified in paragraph 2 or 3 above, as appropriate, less the amount already paid under this paragraph in accordance with section 17.4 of ST/AI/2016/4.

5. These rates may be adjusted following inter-agency consultation.

6. The present circular supersedes information circular ST/IC/2006/60 of 28 December 2006.

* The present circular will remain in effect until further notice.

17-21436 (E) 041217

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United Nations ST/IC/2017/36

Secretariat

8 December 2017

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Official holidays for 2018 at United Nations Headquarters**

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/214 A and decision 52/468, the official holidays for 2018 at United Nations Headquarters have been designated as follows:

1 January	New Year's Day
30 March	Good Friday
28 May	Memorial Day
15 June	Eid al-Fitr
4 July	Independence Day
21 August	Eid al-Adha
3 September	Labour Day
22 November	Thanksgiving Day
25 December	Christmas Day

2. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 69/250 and 72/19, recognized the significance of a number of other holidays. Accordingly, in the interest of respecting the diversity of the staff of the United Nations, staff members are given the option of observing any one of the following eight floating holidays:

8 January	Orthodox Christmas (observed)
19 February	Presidents' Day
21 March	Nowruz
6 April	Orthodox Good Friday
30 April	Day of Vesak
19 September	Yom Kippur
7 November	Diwali
23 November	Gurpurab

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2018.

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3. Staff members should inform their supervisors in advance as early in the year as possible of the floating holiday they wish to observe. Managers are to respect the floating holiday chosen by the staff member. If, owing to exigencies of service, a staff member in the General Service and related categories is required to report for work on the date chosen as the floating holiday, the staff member will be recorded as having taken the floating holiday and compensated for overtime worked on an official holiday. Staff in the Professional and higher categories who are required to work on the date chosen as the floating holiday will not be recorded as having taken the floating holiday and may choose to observe one of the remaining floating holidays.

4. The present circular supersedes information circular ST/IC/2017/25 of 25 October 2017.

United Nations ST/IC/2017/37*

Secretariat

12 December 2017

Information circular**

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Membership of the Health and Life Insurance Committee**

1. On the recommendation of the Joint Negotiation Committee, the staff members who are listed below have been designated to serve on the Health and Life Insurance Committee:

Chair: Geraldine Gourves-Fromigue

Members representing the Secretary-General:

Sumiyo Sudo-Rao
Eugenia Beldo
Steve Damond-Fagot

Members representing the staff:

Michelle Rockcliffe
Robin Della-Rocca
Michael Zilberg

Members ex officio:

Dr. Esther Tan, Senior Medical Officer
Sunitha Korithiwada, Chief, Insurance and Disbursement Service

Secretary: Elma Witherspoon

Alternate Secretary: Jacqueline Greene

2. In accordance with Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/275, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Association of Former International Civil Servants may be represented by up to two observers each at the Committee's meetings.

3. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary of the Committee.

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* Reissued for technical reasons on 28 December 2017.

** The present circular, which cancels and supersedes ST/IC/2013/13, will be in effect until further notice.

17-22825* (E) 281217

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United Nations ST/IC/2017/38

Secretariat

13 December 2017

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Membership of the Field Service Classification Appeals Committee**

1. The purpose of the present circular is to inform the staff that the membership of the Field Service Classification Appeals Committee is as follows:

Chair: Sihem Kefi

Members representing the Administration:

Fatos Abrashi (Alternate Chair)
Gisela Huerta
Affiavi Hyde

Members representing the Field Service staff:

Achim Voss
Nino Pollock
Leila Manly-Spain

2. Jane Kembabazi has been designated Secretary of the Committee. Caroline Ramos has been designated Alternate Secretary.

3. The terms of reference of the Committee are set out in section 7 of administrative instruction ST/AI/1998/9 and ST/AI/1998/9/Corr.1.

* The present circular will be in effect until further notice.

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United Nations ST/IC/2017/39

Secretariat

22 December 2017

Information circular

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Management

Subject: **Abolition of obsolete information circulars**

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, for the purpose of abolishing information circulars containing rules and provisions that are either no longer applicable owing to changed circumstances or that have been incorporated into or replaced by new information circulars, promulgates the following:

1. The following information circulars are hereby abolished:[1]

ST/IC/2002/13 of 28 February 2002, entitled "Budget constraints and support service reductions";

ST/IC/2002/25 of 29 April 2002, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters, 2000–2002";[2]

ST/IC/2002/38 of 14 June 2002, entitled "Privileges and immunities — requests by local authorities to interview staff";

ST/IC/2003/29 of 23 April 2003, entitled "Performance controls of United Nations Internet services";

ST/IC/2004/28 of 26 July 2004, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters, 2002–2003";[2]

ST/IC/2004/38 of 9 September 2004, entitled "Host country travel regulations" for Iraqi nationals;

ST/IC/2005/15 of 8 March 2005, entitled "Host country travel regulations" for Libyan nationals;

ST/IC/2005/17 of 11 March 2005, entitled "Staff selection system";

[1] Abolished information circulars are available from the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

[2] Content is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the subject and for the same period. In the future, the annual report of the Secretary-General will be broadcast to staff and shared via iSeek.

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ST/IC/2005/51 of 30 August 2005, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters, 1 January 2004–30 June 2005";[2]

ST/IC/2005/59 of 31 October 2005, entitled "Host country travel regulations" for Russian nationals;

ST/IC/2005/66 of 14 December 2005, entitled "Preparations for a possible transit strike";

ST/IC/2006/10 of 31 January 2006, entitled "Host country travel regulations" for Vietnamese nationals;

ST/IC/2006/48 of 31 July 2006, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2005–30 June 2006";[2]

ST/IC/2006/50 of 28 November 2006, entitled "Termination of support for obsolete computing equipment";

ST/IC/2007/47 of 31 August 2007, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2006–30 June 2007";[2]

ST/IC/2008/41 of 15 August 2008, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2007–30 June 2008";[2]

ST/IC/2009/8 of 19 January 2009, entitled "Post adjustment classification for New York";

ST/IC/2009/30 of 19 August 2009, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2008–30 June 2009";[2]

ST/IC/2010/17 of 10 June 2010, entitled "After-school recreation and study programme for United Nations children";

ST/IC/2010/26 of 7 September 2010, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2009–30 June 2010";[2]

ST/IC/2011/20 of 27 July 2011, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2010–30 June 2011";[2]

ST/IC/2012/19 of 6 September 2012, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2011–30 June 2012";[2]

ST/IC/2012/23 of 14 November 2012, entitled "United Nations staff efforts to assist those in the City of the New York and the surrounding tri-state area who were impacted by the aftermath of Storm Sandy";

ST/IC/2013/29 of 18 September 2013, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2012–30 June 2013";[2]

ST/IC/2014/13/Amend.1 of 9 March 2017, entitled "Revised salary scales for staff in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters (recruited prior to 1 February 2016)";[1]

ST/IC/2014/26 of 15 October 2014, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014";[2]

ST/IC/2015/22 of 22 September 2015, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015";[2]

ST/IC/2015/23 of 24 November 2015, entitled "Review for consideration for the granting of a continuing appointment, as at 1 July 2013";

ST/IC/2015/28 of 29 December 2015, entitled "United Nations sabbatical leave programme for 2016";

ST/IC/2016/26 of 19 September 2016, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016";[2]

ST/IC/2017/3 of 1 January 2017, entitled "Revised base salary scales for staff in the Professional and higher categories and staff in the Field Service category";[3]

ST/IC/2017/11 of 21 February 2017, entitled "Pensionable remuneration for staff in the Professional and higher categories and for staff in the Field Service category";[4]

ST/IC/2017/12 of 9 March 2017, entitled "Revised salary scales for staff in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters (recruited on or after 1 February 2016)";[5]

ST/IC/2017/14 of 29 March 2017, entitled "Announcement of the 2017 staffing exercises for the Information and Telecommunication Technology Network and the Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network";

ST/IC/2017/20 of 24 July 2017, entitled "Rates of daily subsistence allowance in New York, Geneva and Vienna";[6]

ST/IC/2017/20/Corr.1 of 4 August 2017, entitled "Rates of daily subsistence allowance in New York, Geneva and Vienna";[6]

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[1] Salary scales for staff in the Professional and higher categories is contained in annex I to the Staff Regulations and salary scales for staff in the Field Service category are contained in appendix A to the Staff Rules. The salary scales for staff in the Professional and higher categories and staff in the Field Service category at all duty stations are available at http://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/salaries_allowances/salary.htm.

[4] Pensionable remuneration for staff in the Professional and higher categories and in the Field Service category are contained in Appendix A to the Staff Rules.

[5] The salary scales for staff at all duty stations are available at www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/salaries_allowances/salary.htm. In the future, the yearly revised salary scales for staff in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters will be broadcast to staff and shared via iSeek.

[6] The daily subsistence allowance rates of all duty stations are available at icsc.un.org/map/. In the future, the rates of daily subsistence allowance in New York, Geneva and Vienna will be broadcast to staff and shared via iSeek.

ST/IC/2017/33 of 13 October 2017, entitled "Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour, 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017".[2]

2. The following information circulars automatically expire 31 December 2017:

ST/IC/2016/19 of 10 August 2016, entitled "United Nations sabbatical leave programme for 2017";

ST/IC/2016/29 of 3 November 2016, entitled "Official holidays for 2017 at United Nations Headquarters";

ST/IC/2016/29/Corr.1 of 28 November 2016, entitled "Official holidays for 2017 at United Nations Headquarters";

ST/IC/2016/29/Corr.2 of 20 January 2017, entitled "Official holidays for 2017 at United Nations Headquarters";

ST/IC/2017/4 of 12 January 2017, entitled "Payment of 2016 income taxes";

ST/IC/2017/9 of 31 January 2017, entitled "Language and Communications Programme at Headquarters, 2017";

ST/IC/2017/9/Corr.1 of 12 June 2017, entitled "Language and Communications Programme at Headquarters, 2017";

ST/IC/2017/16 of 27 April 2017, entitled "Announcement of the "opt-in" period for the first 2017 managed mobility exercise, for the Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network";

ST/IC/2017/26 of 21 August 2017, entitled "Working hours during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly for staff members at United Nations Headquarters".

United Nations ST/IC/2017/40

Secretariat

28 December 2017

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Language and Communications Programme at Headquarters, 2018**

1. Language courses in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are offered to promote linguistic balance and multilingualism within the Secretariat and to improve the language abilities of staff, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolutions 2480 B (XXIII), 43/224 D and 50/11. The courses provide staff members and external participants (see para. 20 below) with the opportunity to learn the official languages of the Organization and to improve their communication skills.

2. The present information circular contains information on the official policies of the Language and Communications Programme at Headquarters. It also contains information on the types of language courses, schedules and formats available, the course calendar for 2018, eligibility criteria and registration procedures, the responsibilities of participants and other information, including where to address enquiries.

3. Participants in the Language and Communications Programme are responsible for reading and following all registration instructions and information contained in the present circular, as well as those to be found on the human resources portal (see https://hr.un.org/language-programmes-unhq).

I. Types of courses and schedules

Types of courses

4. The Language and Communications Programme offers learning activities for developing proficiency as well as work-related communication skills, in the six United Nations official languages. These activities are available as regular courses, specialized courses and department-specific learning solutions.

(a) Regular courses

5. Regular courses range from beginner (level 1) to intermediate or advanced (level 9), depending on the language. The courses focus on all language activities

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2018.

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involving reception, production and interaction — listening and reading; writing and oral production; and written and oral interaction — and are aimed at developing both fluency and accuracy.

(b) Specialized courses

6. Specialized courses focus on specific language skills, tasks or topics that help to develop proficiency in the language. They are offered in all six official languages and include preparatory courses for the language proficiency examinations, courses aimed at improving participants' understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals and learning activities focused on improving spoken fluency or promoting cultural awareness.

7. Specialized courses vary by term, and new courses are introduced to address the needs of participants in the Programme.

(c) Department-specific learning solutions

8. Departments of the United Nations Secretariat with staff who perform writing or speaking tasks may request tailor-made learning solutions (e.g. training of trainers courses, workshops, short instructional videos) for their specific needs. Further information can be obtained by contacting learning@un.org.

Schedules

9. Classes for regular courses typically meet for a total of three hours per week for 10–12 weeks. Classes may last one hour or one and a half hours and are usually held two or three times per week. Classes usually start at the following times: before work (8 or 8.30 a.m.), lunchtime (noon, 12.30, 1, 1.30 or 2 p.m.) and after work (5, 5.30 or 6 p.m.)

10. Classes for specialized courses may meet for only one or two hours per week and may last fewer than 12 weeks.

11. Schedules for department-specific learning solutions are tailored to the specific needs of the department.

12. Other course schedules may be offered during the year.

II. Course delivery formats

13. To serve staff both at Headquarters and in the field with varied working conditions and schedules, the courses indicated above are offered in a variety of formats, depending on the language programme:

(a) **Live classroom instruction**. Classes are held at the United Nations Learning Centre for Multilingualism and Career Development, located in the 3rd basement of the North Lawn Building (NL-3B);

(b) **Live online instruction**;

(c) **Online self-paced learning**. Participants complete coursework at their chosen time:

(i) With instructor support;

(ii) Without instructor support;

(d) **Blended learning**. Participants complete part of the coursework via live classroom instruction and part as self-paced learning.

III. Calendar for 2018

Course calendar

14. The 2018 language course and learning calendar consists of three terms as follows:

2018 winter term (8 January–5 April)

Language classes:	8 January–30 March 2018
End-of-term examinations:	2–5 April 2018
Registration for courses beginning the week of 8 January 2018:	28 November–28 December 2017
Registration for all other courses:	Two weeks prior to the course start date
Last day to drop a regular course:	12 January 2018
Last day to drop a specialized course:	24 hours after the first class

2018 spring term (23 April–20 July)

Language classes:	23 April–13 July 2018
End-of-term examinations:	16–20 July 2018
Registration for courses beginning the week of 23 April:	13 March–10 April 2018
Registration for all other courses:	Two weeks prior to the course start date
Last day to drop a regular course:	30 April 2018
Last day to drop a specialized course:	24 hours after the first class

2018 fall term (17 September–14 December)

Language classes:	17 September–7 December 2018
End-of-term examinations:	10–14 December 2018
Registration for courses starting the week of 17 September:	26 June–4 September 2018
Registration for all other courses:	Two weeks prior to the course start date
Last day to drop a regular course:	24 September 2018
Last day to drop a specialized course:	24 hours after the first class.

Placement tests calendar

15. Registration for placement tests begins on the following dates:

(a) For the winter term: 6 November 2017

(b) For the spring term: 19 February 2018

(c) For the fall term: 5 June 2018

16. Dates for tests and registration deadlines vary depending on the language. Specific dates and further details about placement tests are available from the human resources portal (https://hr.un.org/language-programmes-unhq).

IV. Eligibility

17. Detailed information about eligibility criteria can be found on the human resources portal (see https://hr.un.org/unhq/languages/eligibility-table).

Valid United Nations grounds pass and/or contract

18. To enrol in a course, staff members must have a contract valid at least until the end of that course. If the contract expires before the end of the course, staff members may still enrol if they submit an official letter or e-mail from their direct supervisor or Executive Officer confirming that their contract is expected to be extended at least until the end of the course and providing expected dates.

19. All participants in language courses must have a United Nations grounds pass valid until the end of courses for which they register.

Fees and payment

Tuition fees

20. Only certain external participants (e.g., recognized spouses and partners of staff members) are required to pay full tuition fees upon registration. Detailed information about paying and non-paying external participants can be found on the human resources portal (see https://hr.un.org/unhq/languages/eligibility-table).

21. Information on tuition fees can be found at https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/Course%20rates%20and%20fees%20%28Jan%202017%29_0.pdf.

22. No refund or credit for future terms will be issued once the tuition fee has been paid.

Incomplete attendance fees

23. Incomplete attendance fees are applied to encourage commitment to enrolment and successful completion of the course, as instances of incomplete attendance have financial implications for the Organization and must therefore be kept to a minimum. Participants are expected to be present throughout the term on a regular basis (a minimum of 75 per cent attendance for regular courses, 65 per cent for specialized courses) and to complete the course assignments.

24. Participants who fail the course assessment and have not met the minimum attendance requirements will be charged an incomplete attendance fee of $125. The incomplete penalty fee is applied the next time the participant enrols for any language course. Payments must be made according to the instructions in paragraphs 30–32 below.

25. An enrolled student who does not attend the first week of classes and does not notify the teacher in advance will be automatically dropped from the official list in order to accommodate those from the waiting list. An incomplete attendance fee (no-show penalty fee) of $125 will apply the next time the student enrols for any language course. The no-show penalty fee is also payable by participants who do not attend for the required end-of-term course assessment, even if their attendance is satisfactory.

26. Paying participants are not subject to incomplete attendance fees and must pay in full to repeat a course, regardless of their attendance.

Incomplete attendance fee waiver

27. Pending penalty fees are automatically waived if participants leave a gap of two consecutive terms before returning to the programme (in which case participants are required to take a placement test).

28. Participants who owe an incomplete attendance fee may request a waiver if they provide any of the following supporting documentation for each period of absence:

(a) A sick leave certificate;

(b) Proof of mission assignment of which they were not aware at the time of registration (certification from the participant's supervisor may be required);

(c) An official letter or e-mail from the participant's supervisor clearly indicating the supervisor's title and contact information, together with the period of absence, and explaining that the participant had a change in work assignment that interfered with course attendance.

29. Waiver requests must be submitted with supporting documentation for each period of absence at the time of course registration in Inspira. Waiver requests submitted in person or sent by e-mail will not be accepted.

Payment

30. All payments must be made at the Cashier's Office, located on the 20th floor of the Secretariat Building. The office is open from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

31. Payment must be made in cash or by cheque (payable to the United Nations). Credit cards are not accepted, in accordance with Cashier's Office policy.

32. Participants should indicate that their payment is "to be credited to the United Nations for the Language and Communications Programme". Participants must upload the proof of payment with their registration request in Inspira.

V. Registration procedures

General information

33. Registration for language courses and placement tests at Headquarters must be completed in Inspira. Relevant communications must also be submitted in Inspira. No in-person registration is available, although registration help sessions are provided to assist applicants.

34. Step-by-step instructions on accessing Inspira and registering for courses and placement tests are available from the human resources portal (see https://hr.un.org/language-programmes-unhq).

35. Learners cannot register for:

(a) Two courses at the same level and/or with the same content, but at different times or days in the same term;

(b) Two courses at different levels in the same term;

(c) Two courses with overlapping schedules.

36. Registration does not guarantee enrolment in a placement test or course. Incomplete applications (i.e., supporting documentation missing in Inspira) and applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Ineligible candidates will be rejected.

Registration priorities and deadlines

37. Complete applications are processed in the order in which they are received. However, in the following cases, priority is given to participants who have not previously taken the course:

(a) When the number of applications for a specialized course is higher than the maximum allowed;

(b) When an applicant wishes to repeat a regular course after successful completion.

Placement tests

38. Only beginners may enrol directly in level 1 courses. A participant must take a placement test for a language if he or she is:

(a) A learner who is new to the programme and has some knowledge of the language;

(b) A returning participant who has not taken a course in that language in the programme for the previous two consecutive terms.

39. Participants who can provide proof of their level of proficiency in a language may contact the relevant coordinator for a written waiver of the placement test requirement and for course recommendations.

40. Placement test results are valid for two terms following the date of placement at a course level. The relevant language coordinator will provide a list of suggested courses with the placement results.

41. Participants enrolled in a regular course who miss or fail their end-of-term examination, or any alternative form of course assessment, cannot request to take a placement test when registering for the following term. They must re-register at the same level for either of the two subsequent terms.

Maximum number of enrolments per term

42. Participants may register for courses in different languages up to a maximum of five hours per week. However, registration is limited to one regular course per term.

43. Exceptional authorization is required to register within the same term for:

(a) Two regular courses in two different languages;

(b) More than five hours per week of language and communications training.

44. Applicants with work-related justifications for enrolment in multiple courses will be given priority consideration.

45. Requests from staff members for more than one lunchtime course per day require prior approval from the participant's supervisor.

Role of the supervisor

46. Participants are required to discuss with their supervisor any plan to take language classes in the Programme and to agree on a learning plan before submitting their registration.

47. Supervisors are expected to implement gender parity and equality in the workplace. Regarding the learning of language and communication skills, they must encourage and approve male and female staff members' requests, equally, to participate in available courses.

48. Supervisors, taking into account the exigencies of service and requests received from other staff members, are encouraged to consider the approval of such requests.

49. Staff members in New York are entitled to a one-hour lunch break, which may be used instead for in-house training, such as a language class. In this case, it is recommended that supervisors grant an additional 20 minutes for a quick meal before or after the class.

50. For lunchtime courses that last more than 60 minutes, supervisors and staff members should agree on the coverage of duties when they agree on the learning plan.

Confirmation of enrolment

51. Applications will be reviewed to ensure that eligibility conditions are met for admission to courses. Automated enrolment confirmations, which will include all course details, are sent by e-mail by the end of the week preceding the beginning of the term. Applicants who have not received any confirmation by that time may contact their language coordinator. Only those who receive such e-mail notifications will be enrolled in a course. It is therefore critical that registrants maintain accurate and up-to-date contact information in Inspira.

52. No attendance of classes will be allowed without confirmation of enrolment from Inspira. Participants who are not on the attendance list for the class that they wish to attend should contact learning@un.org or the language coordinator for further information.

53. Wait-listed participants should regularly check their "My learning" page in Inspira to see if their status for the course has changed from "wait-listed" to "enrolled". If the status has changed to "enrolled", they will be notified. In this case:

(a) It is the participant's responsibility to catch up on the course content and assignments; however, if the requirements seem too difficult or the participant's work schedule has changed, he or she may drop the course without penalty before attending a second session;

(b) Wait-listed participants will not be liable for incomplete attendance fees for absences prior to their confirmation of enrolment.

VI. Learner responsibilities

Cancellation or change of enrolment by the participant

54. Enrolled participants who are unable to attend a course are advised to cancel their registration as soon as possible to allow other participants to take their place. Participants who do not cancel their registration in Inspira by the deadline for dropping the course will incur an incomplete attendance fee.

55. Opportunities to change to a different course or level after enrolment are limited. Participants must contact the relevant language coordinator as soon as possible and no later than the deadline for dropping the course as indicated in paragraph 14.

56. Any authorized change of course or level is final.

Attendance and punctuality

57. The punctuality of teachers and participants is an important part of the learning process. Learners are responsible for attending and actively participating in the language classes in which they are enrolled.

58. Participants must inform their teacher in advance if they will arrive late, leave early or be absent, as incomplete attendance fees may apply otherwise. Teachers may provide an opportunity for the participant to make up for the work missed, but are not required to do so.

Assessment

Regular courses

59. Assessment is an integral and mandatory part of the regular courses of the Language and Communications Programme.

60. To advance to the next level in a language, participants must pass all components of the end-of-term examination or continuous evaluation, if offered (the passing score is 65 points out of 100).

61. Participants may, however, submit in advance a written explanation to the relevant coordinator if they are unable to take the assessment. The coordinator will then determine whether the reasons provided justify a make-up assessment.

62. Participants who pass a level but choose to repeat it may do so only in the immediately subsequent term. In such situations, participants are not required to take the final examination again.

Specialized courses

63. Specialized courses do not have end-of-term examinations. Passing a specialized course requires a minimum of 65 per cent attendance and a 65 per cent score, in accordance with the evaluation criteria set by the teacher at the beginning of the course. Some courses may require the completion of a final project in addition to the attendance requirement.

Score reports

64. The results of course assessments for regular courses will be accessible to participants in Inspira. Evaluation scores for specialized courses do not appear in Inspira.

VII. Additional information

Course cancellations

65. A course that does not have the minimum number of participants may be cancelled. In such cases, participants will be notified by the language coordinator. As a special courtesy, participants who were registered in the cancelled course may be enrolled by the coordinator into another course appropriate to their level and needs if that option exists and the students agree.

Class cancellations

66. United Nations official holidays and building closures may affect the total number of hours of some courses. All efforts will be made to make up any hours lost, but that may not be possible in some cases. No refunds will be given in the case of missed classes.

Course materials

67. Participants are responsible for purchasing textbooks or other course materials, as instructed by the teacher or coordinator during the first week of the term. Required

textbooks may be available for purchase under special arrangements with vendors located in the United Nations Learning Centre for Multilingualism and Career Development (NL-3B).

VIII. Enquiries

68. For general enquiries and information, participants may contact the Language and Communications Programme:

(a) In person at the United Nations Learning Centre (NL-3B), 2–3.30 p.m., Monday to Thursday;

(b) By e-mail: learning@un.org;

(c) By telephone:

(i) Maria Catherina David-Dakay, Human Resources Assistant, 917-367-2623;

(ii) Koji Kitagawa, Staff Development Assistant, 212-963-8726.

69. For enquiries related to course content or to arrange appointments with language coordinators or head teachers, participants may contact:

(a) Arabic Programme Coordinator: Riadh Bounatirou, 212-963-8535

(b) Chinese Programme Head Teacher: Zhuting Chang, 212-963-2672

(c) English Programme Coordinator: Jodi Nooyen, 212-963-2001

(d) French Programme Coordinator: Pascal Schaller, 212-963-0634

(e) Russian Programme Head Teacher: Anna Dvigubski, 212-963-7063

(f) Spanish Programme Coordinator: Fernando López-Murcia, 212-963-4344

70. For additional enquiries, participants may contact Felipe Martín-Saráchaga, Head of the Language and Communications Programme (martinsarachaga@un.org).

United Nations ST/IC/2017/41

Secretariat

29 December 2017

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Review of staff claims for dependency benefits for 2016**

1. The entitlement to dependency benefits is established in staff rule 3.6 and implemented for 2016 under administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, entitled "Dependency status and dependency benefits". The purpose of the present circular is to inform staff members who were in receipt of dependency benefits in 2016 and who have not been subject to the 2016 dependency review[1] of the manner in which the review of their 2016 dependency benefits will be conducted, as well as the timelines for the exercise.

2. For ease of reference, annex I contains details on the types of dependency benefits, annex II contains contact information, and annex III contains details on the documentation required for the continuation of benefits.

I. Review of dependency benefits using the Umoja annual declaration form and timeline for the review

3. The 2016 review of dependency benefits will be conducted in Umoja using the annual declaration form, which will be available to staff on 15 January 2018.

4. The 2016 Umoja declaration form contains the information on personal status and the recognized dependants of each staff member as at 31 December 2016. Staff members are requested to review the information carefully. If the data are correct, they must certify the accuracy of the information contained in the form and supply relevant additional information, including the answer to the question regarding the amount of dependency benefit in the form of a government grant received for each child, if applicable. If the data are incorrect, they will be given the opportunity to correct the data before submitting the certification. Depending on the benefit

* The present circular will expire on 31 December 2018.

[1] Staff members from the United Nations Office at Geneva, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the International Trade Centre, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and any other entities that have completed the 2016 review of dependency benefits are not required to repeat the review and comply with the instructions and deadline contained in the present circular.

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received, supporting documentation may also be required (see sect. II and annex III for details).

5. Staff members in receipt of dependency benefits for 2016 will receive, by email from the Office of Human Resources Management, instructions on how to access their annual declaration form in Umoja on the day on which the review begins.

6. Upon receipt of the instructions, staff members who have a dependant recognized by the United Nations shall review their dependency data for 2016 in the Umoja employee self-service module and electronically submit the certification and supporting documentation as soon as possible, but no later than 16 March 2018.

II. Supporting documentation

7. In order to confirm continued eligibility to receive certain dependency benefits, supporting documentation may be required.

8. **Documentation not required**. No documentation is required for the continuation of dependency benefits for the following dependants:

(a) An unemployed spouse; or

(b) A dependent child under the age of 18 residing with the staff member and not receiving dependency benefit in the form of a government grant.

9. **Documentation required**. To verify a staff member's entitlement to dependency benefits, and to establish the staff member's continued entitlement to such dependency benefits, documentation in support of the entitlement is required from the staff member for any dependants not mentioned under paragraph 8 above. See annex III to the present circular for a summary of the documentation required in support of a staff member's entitlement to dependency benefits.

10. **Obligation to retain original documentation**. Staff members must retain all required original documentation in support of an entitlement to dependency benefits for a period of five years and must be ready to provide that documentation to the Office of Human Resources Management or the Office of Internal Oversight Services upon request, within 30 days, for monitoring purposes (see annex III). Failure to do so will result in the immediate recovery of moneys and the discontinuation of benefits and could result in disciplinary action.

11. Staff members are required to submit the necessary documentation in support of an entitlement to dependency benefits using the annual declaration form. Partial documentation is not acceptable and may result in the immediate recovery of moneys and the discontinuation of benefits and could result in disciplinary action.

12. When evidence of support payments is necessary, the following will be considered as acceptable proof of payment: cancelled (i.e. paid) cheques, money order receipts, wire transfer receipts and original records of bank transactions, including printouts of online bank transfer receipts. Cash transactions are not considered to be acceptable proof of support. Payments or transfers made to another party or person will not be accepted, except for cases where transfers are made to a legal guardian.

13. The submission of forged documents, the making of a false certification of the information contained in the annual declaration form or a misrepresentation of facts relating to a claim for dependency benefits may lead to the initiation of a disciplinary process and the imposition of disciplinary measures.

III. Recoveries and overpayments

14. Dependency benefits will be discontinued and overpayment recovered in accordance with section 3 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2009/1 when a staff member does not submit the annual declaration form and any requisite documentation by the deadline of 16 March 2018. Before the recovery of any overpayment, staff members will be advised in writing of the decision to recover the overpayment and of the reasons therefor. Recovery will be made through deductions of 20 per cent of the staff member's net monthly salary (excluding United Nations Federal Credit Union deductions) until such time as the full amount is recovered. In instances where the duration of the staff member's contract does not allow for a deduction at as low a rate as 20 per cent, the overpayment will be deducted at a monthly rate that is sufficient to recover the full amount by the expiration date of the contract.

15. Staff members are reminded that, in addition to discontinuation of dependency benefits, non-compliance with the submission deadline may also result in a determination that the claimed individuals are no longer dependants, which could have an impact on the continuation of other benefits, including the G-4 visa, education grant, education grant travel and home leave travel. It is therefore imperative that staff members complete the annual declaration form by the deadline of 16 March 2018.

IV. Adding dependants retroactively

16. In accordance with staff rule 3.17, staff members are reminded that, if they have not been receiving an allowance, grant or other payment to which they are entitled, they shall not receive retroactively such allowance, grant or payment unless they have made a written claim within one year following the date on which they would have been entitled to the initial payment. In this regard, staff members wishing to add dependants may do so by submitting the required original supporting documentation to their respective human resources partners and submitting an electronic request through the Umoja employee self-service module. For more details on the required supporting documentation for request or continuation of the benefit, see annex III.

Annex I

Types of dependency benefits

1. Staff members in the General Service and related categories may receive a dependency allowance for each recognized primary dependant, who may be a spouse or a child or children. The amounts are set out in the local salary scales, which are established for every duty station and are periodically revised.

2. Staff members in the Professional and higher categories and in the Field Service category were paid salary at the dependency rate in 2016 for the first recognized primary dependant, who may be a spouse or a child. A dependency allowance was paid for each additional dependent child at the rates approved by the General Assembly.

3. The conditions for the recognition of a 2016 dependency benefit on account of a spouse, child or children or secondary dependant of the staff member are set out in paragraph (a) of staff rule 3.6 and in administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5.

Dependent spouse

4. A spouse is recognized as a dependant in 2016 when the spouse's gross occupational earnings, if any, do not exceed the limit established for this purpose as set out in staff rule 3.6 (a) (i) and in administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, sections 2.1 to 2.7.

5. For staff members in the General Service and related categories and the National Professional Officer category, the earnings limit for 2016 is the lowest entry level of the United Nations General Service gross salary scale in force on 1 January 2016 for the closest United Nations duty station in the country of the spouse's place of work.

6. For staff members in the Professional and higher categories and staff members in the Field Service category, the earnings limit in 2016 for the spouse's annual gross occupational earnings is the higher of:

(i) The lowest entry level of the United Nations General Service gross salary scale in force on 1 January 2016 for the closest United Nations duty station in the country of the spouse's place of work; or

(ii) The gross salary for the lowest entry level in force on 1 January 2016 at the base of the salary system (G-2, step 1, for New York).

7. In New York, the earnings limit for 2016 was $41,461 (gross salary in effect on 1 January 2016 for a staff member at the G-2, step 1, level).

Dependent child or children

8. The conditions for the recognition of a dependency benefit for 2016 on account of a child or children of the staff member are set out in staff rule 3.6 (a) (ii)-(iv) and administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, section 3. Dependency benefits for 2016 on account of children with a disability will be paid in accordance with the provisions of administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, section 4.

Secondary dependants

9. The conditions for the recognition of a 2016 dependency benefit on account of a secondary dependant of the staff member are set out in staff rule 3.6 (a) (v) and administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, section 5. When a secondary dependant is recognized, a benefit will be paid at the rate determined by the General Assembly for staff in the Professional and higher categories and in the Field Service category. For staff in the General Service and related categories in New York, the allowance will be paid in the amount set out in the local salary scales, as periodically revised, that are established for each duty station.

Annex II

Contact information

1. Staff members who are required to submit documentation in support of an entitlement to dependency benefits for 2016, or who have any questions regarding dependency benefits or the annual declaration form, should contact their respective human resources partners, as designated for each department or office, by telephone or email.

2. If you are unsure who your human resources partner is, please contact your local human resources office. For New York, please refer to the Umoja UNHQ support page (https://iseek.un.org/department/unhq-umoja-information), where you can find the list of all human resources partners and walk-in hours and location.

3. For all technical enquiries about using the annual declaration form in Umoja, please submit an iNeed ticket if your employee/manager self-service (ESS/MSS) focal point is unable to resolve the issue.

Annex III

Required documentation for dependency benefits

The following table contains a summary of the documentation required as evidence of a staff member's entitlement to dependency benefits:

1. For a spouse with no occupational earnings and claimed as a dependant	No additional documentation is required. However, the staff member will be required to certify that the spouse was unemployed for the period under review (2016).
2. For a spouse with occupational earnings and claimed as a dependant	Proof of gross occupational earnings: all W-2 forms (residents of the United States of America), tax returns or original statements of earnings from all the spouse's employers.
3. For every child claimed as a dependant	An original birth certificate must be presented when the child is claimed as a dependant for the first time.
4. If in receipt of the allowance, for a child under the age of 18 residing with the staff member	No additional documentation is required.
5. For a child (natural or legally adopted) not residing with the staff member or with the other parent (except as provided in number 6 below)	Proof of all payments made directly to the child or to the child's legal guardian for the required amount during 2016, in the form of cancelled (i.e. paid) cheques, money order or wire transfer receipts or records of bank transactions. The amount of support should be at least equal to the amount of the dependency benefit received from the Organization. In addition, in the case of minor children, a notarized affidavit from the legal guardian must be provided attesting to the legal guardianship of the child, that the child resides with the legal guardian and that the staff member is providing continuous support for the upkeep of the child. Cash transactions are not considered acceptable proof of support, nor is any payment made to or through a third party.
6. For a child of a staff member who is not the custodial parent or who has joint custody of the child	The original or certified copy of the divorce decree or other court document specifying the amount of child support to be paid by the staff member, plus proof of payment in the year concerned in the form of cancelled (i.e. paid) cheques, money order or wire transfer receipts or records of bank transactions. Cash transactions are not considered acceptable proof of support, nor is any payment made to or through a third party. The amount of payment should be at least the amount of the court-ordered child support, or the amount of the child dependency benefit received from the Organization, whichever is higher. In the absence of a court document, an original notarized affidavit from the custodial parent must be provided attesting that the staff member provided continuing support and specifying the amounts paid during 2016, together with the proof of payment described in the initial paragraph.

7. For a child between the ages of 18 and 21[a]	Staff members who were not in receipt of an education grant should submit an original completed form P.41/B (certificate of school attendance) for the school years 2015/16 and 2016/17. Where the school year coincides with the calendar year, form P.41/B should be submitted for 2016. No additional documentation for proof of full-time school attendance is required for a child for whom the staff member received an education grant for the academic years 2015/16 and 2016/17.
8. For a child of a staff member who is in receipt of a government grant	Original government assistance documents reflecting the amounts received each year.
9. For a secondary dependant who resides with the staff member	Staff member's certification of support, provided on the annual declaration form, is needed. For a secondary dependant who resides or comes to reside with the staff member in 2016, proof of residency needs to be submitted.
10. For a secondary dependant who did not reside with the staff member[b]	Proof of all payments made directly to the secondary dependant for the required amount during 2016, in the form of cancelled (i.e. paid) cheques, money order or wire transfer receipts or records of bank transactions. Cash transactions are not considered acceptable proof of support. The secondary dependant must be reflected as the recipient on all proof of payment. The staff member must provide one half or more of the secondary dependant's support and, in any case, at least twice the amount of the dependency allowance.

[a] Dependency status is recognized through a period of vacation between school years when the child enrols for full-time attendance during the regular school year. Otherwise, the dependency status ceases on the last day of full-time attendance at the educational institution. The required forms are available on iSeek (https://iseek-newyork.un.org/webpgdept593_53) or from the Headquarters Deployment Group and local personnel offices.

[b] At the time of establishment of an entitlement to a benefit for a secondary dependant, staff members should submit in person their own birth certificate as well as the birth certificate or passport of the secondary dependant, with an original, completed form P.85 and proof of support as stated above. Please note that the birth certificates and/or passport must be original or certified true copies.